

# ENGINEERING HERITAGE RECOGNITION PROGRAM

## Proposal to Nominate

# King's Dockyard

## as an Item of Engineering Heritage Interest

<b>Item Name:</b>	<b>King's Dockyard</b>		
<b>Other/Former Names:</b>	Government Dockyard		
<b>Locality:</b>	Sydney Cove, West		
<b>Address:</b>	Sydney Cove West		
<b>Co-ordinates</b>	Lat: -33.85954644000938    Lon: 151.20944468657643		
<b>Current Owner:</b>	Government of NSW		
<b>Original Owner:</b>	Gadigal people (the traditional Aboriginal owners).		
<b>Current use:</b>	Buried archaeological site		
<b>Former use:</b>	Government dockyard		
<b>Proposed use:</b>	Buried archaeological site		
<b>Item Condition:</b>	Disturbed site with relics buried beneath the Museum of Contemporary Art and paving.		
<b>Designer:</b>	Originally, Thomas Moore.		
<b>Builder:</b>	Convicts		
<b>Started:</b>	1797	<b>Originally Completed:</b>	C. 1798-79
		<b>Macquarie's improvements:</b>	C. 1816
<b>History:</b>	<p>Initially, the Colony of NSW was not permitted to have a dockyard, but this was found to be impractical for an island colony that depended substantially for support from England, on the other side of the world.</p> <p>Daniel Paine, who had been appointed Sydney's first master boatbuilder lasted less than a year and was replaced in 1796 by Thomas Moore who commenced work on the King's Dockyard in 1797.</p> <p>Reports the following year make mention of tradesmen related to the dockyard's core business (shipwrights, caulkers, boatbuilders, labourers and watchmen), as well as others engaged in building the various facilities of the yard (brick and stone layers, plasterers and labourers). The gradually emerging facilities included a workshop, a storehouse for the joiners, a watch-house, an apartment in the dockyard for the clerk, a joiner's shop, a smith's shop, a steamer (for the timber) and a warder's lodge.</p> <p>By 1802 about 28 men were regularly employed in the dockyard. Along with the lumberyard on the corner of High (George) and Bridge streets, the dockyard became one of the two biggest centres of convict employment in the early days of Sydney.</p> <p>In 1802, the <i>Porpoise</i>, <i>Lady Nelson</i>, <i>Francis</i>, <i>Norfolk</i>, and <i>Bee</i> were repaired, and in 1803 Thomas Moore completed the <i>Cumberland</i>. The following year, the <i>Integrity</i> was built; she was the first vessel to actually be launched, rather</p>		

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	<p>than being floated off as previously. On the strength of her success, Governor King wrote home, convinced that if more shipwrights were sent, the dockyard could turn out a 38-gun frigate in less than two years.</p> <p>Governor Macquarie considerably enlarged and improved the dockyard. Macquarie's improvements included the construction of: four repairing docks (three of which were probably capable of dry-dock usage); new wharfs and quays; a sail room; workshops; boathouses; offices for the Master Builder and Master Attendant; and a 4-metre (12 ft) high stone wall around dockyard. Contiguous to the dockyard he also had built '<i>A Stone Built Barrack for the Coxswain and Crews of the Government Boats enclosed with a high Stone Wall</i>' – this was Cadman's Cottage</p> <p>In 1831 dockyard activity was being wound back and the establishment reduced to a minimum of around 14. Ship building and repairs were put out to tender and the dockyard only looked after small government boats.</p> <p>In 1833 after 36 years of operation and as the era of wooden ships was beginning to come to an end, the King's Dockyard in Sydney Cove was closed down.</p> <p>The Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) occupies the former Maritime Services Board building and opened to the public in November 1991. Needing additional space, it proposed building over the adjacent car park below which were the remains of the colony's government dockyard. Archaeological testing carried out in 2008 added to information gathered from previous excavations between 1997 and 2000. Amongst other features the testing established the locations of three of the four docks established by Macquarie, two of which lay directly below the car park.</p> <p>Following their recording, the dockyard remains were covered in situ, ensuring their protection for future re-excavation and study. Sensitive placement of footing pads and groupings of piles for the building extension minimised their intervention into the working surfaces around the former docks.</p> <p>While the dockyard remains had been protected under the 'relics' provisions of the Heritage Act, they received enhanced statutory protection in 2011, when the archaeological significance of Sydney Cove West Archaeological Precinct was included on the State Heritage Register. This listing incorporates the subsurface layer of a prescribed curtilage in the south-eastern corner of The Rocks, and includes the site of the Museum of Contemporary Art.</p> <p>Unfortunately, a conscious decision was taken not to display the dockyard relics following considerations of cost, architectural implications and other difficulties.</p> <p>A feeble attempt at interpretation was made by inserting the following in the outside pavement: <i>In the loch blood stricken time hidden lay lost under this place of birth under your mind – lies a tunnel under this stone salty darkness forgotten place of docks and ships</i>, with an arrow on an adjacent wall pointing down to something below.</p> <p>While this may have seemed clever and meaningful to the designer, sadly, it is unintelligible to the public and cavalier in its superficial and obscure acknowledgement of the significance of the remains of the dockyard below.</p>
<b>Description:</b>	<p>The King's Dockyard is an archaeological relic. Following its partial excavation for recording purposes in 2008, it was covered in sand and now lies beneath the Museum of Contemporary Art and the paving and promenade between it and Sydney Cove.</p>

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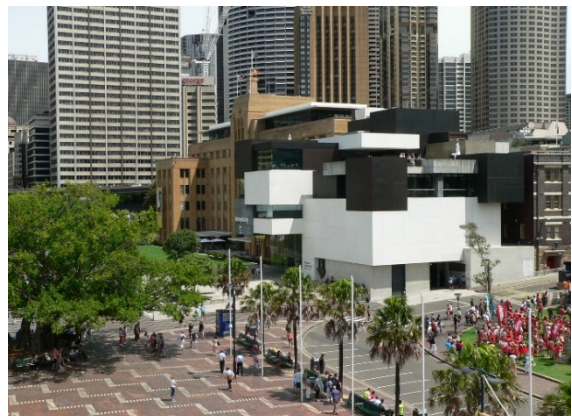
	<p>In 1798 its facilities were reported to include: a workshop, a storehouse for the joiners, a watch-house, an apartment in the dockyard for the clerk, a joiner's shop, a smith's shop, a steamer (for the timber) and a warder's lodge.</p> <p>Improvements ordered by Governor Macquarie included the construction of: four repairing docks (three of which were probably capable of dry-dock usage); new wharfs and quays; a sail room; workshops; boathouses; offices for the Master Builder and Master Attendant; and a 4-metre (12 ft) high stone wall around dockyard. Contiguous to the dockyard he also had built '<i>A Stone Built Barrack for the Coxswain and Crews of the Government Boats enclosed with a high Stone Wall</i>' – this was Cadman's Cottage. Cadman's Cottage (1816) still remains and is of 'cultural significance as a rare, extant early example of Colonial Sydney and its historical maritime dependency'.</p> <p>The dockyard site is buried beneath the Museum of Contemporary Art.</p>
<b>Significance:</b>	<p>The Sydney Cove West Archaeological Precinct includes the remains of the King's Dockyard; it is a site of exceptional archaeological significance as evidence of some of the earliest colonial and maritime infrastructure of the convict settlement of Australia.</p> <p><b>The site has outstanding and unique historical significance for the identified, predictive and potential archaeology of: the first Government naval dockyards established in Australia by Governor John Hunter (1797), that were improved and enlarged by Governor Macquarie (1818-22);</b> the Commissariat Stores buildings commissioned in 1809 and started by the military administrator Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Foveaux, and completed by Governor Macquarie (1810 and 1812); the seawall constructed for Circular Quay (1840s-1850s); the first public wharf built in the colony (c. 1798); the colony's first market place (c.1807-11), the first post office (c.1811), the Colonial Storekeepers Building (1823) and one of the colony's earliest commercial and residential precincts that included the residences and premises of important early emancipists Mary Reiby and Isaac Nichols (dating from c.1798). The site may also contain remains associated with pre-1788 Aboriginal occupation of the area.</p> <p>The site has state significance as a convict landing place. The general area for the landing of the First Fleet is likely to have been the western foreshores of Sydney Cove, somewhere north of the former Maritime Services Board building. The Third Fleet are known to have landed at the Hospital Wharf in 1791.</p> <p><b>The Precinct has state significant associations with Governor John Hunter; with the military administrator Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Foveaux; with Governor Macquarie;</b> with significant early emancipists Isaac Nichols and Mary Reiby; with the convicts of the Third Fleet who disembarked at Hospital Wharf in 1791, and with Lieutenant-Colonel George Barney, colonial engineer, for the construction of this section of Circular Quay between 1844 and 1859.</p>
<b>Webpage Summary:</b>	<p>Initially, the Colony of NSW was not permitted to have a dockyard, but this was found to be impractical for an island colony that depended substantially for support from England on the other side of the world, and so work commenced on the King's Dockyard in 1797.</p> <p>By 1802 about 28 men were regularly employed in the dockyard. Along with the lumberyard on the corner of High (George) and Bridge streets, the dockyard became one of the two biggest centres of convict employment in the early days of Sydney.</p> <p>Governor Macquarie considerably enlarged and improved the dockyard,</p>

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	<p>including construction of Cadman's Cottage - the barracks for the Coxswain and crews.</p> <p>In 1833 after 36 years of operation and as the era of wooden ships was beginning to come to an end, the King's Dockyard in Sydney Cove was closed down.</p> <p>In the mid-2000s, needing additional space, the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) proposed building over the adjacent car park, below which were the remains of the dockyard.</p> <p>Archaeological work established the remains of the dockyard, including the locations of three of the four docks established by Governor Macquarie. These were covered over and the new building was designed to avoid them. The remains are protected as part of the Sydney Cove West Archaeological Precinct which is on the State Heritage Register.</p> <p>Unfortunately, a conscious decision was taken not to display the relics following considerations of cost, architectural implications and other difficulties. However, a feeble attempt at interpretation was made by inserting the following in the outside pavement: <i>In the loch blood stricken time hidden lay lost under this place of birth under your mind – lies a tunnel under this stone salty darkness forgotten place of docks and ships</i>, with an arrow on an adjacent wall pointing down to something below.</p>		
<b>Engineering Theme:</b>	Transport; Sea; Docks.		
<b>Heritage Listing:</b>	NSW State Heritage Register: Sydney Cove West Archaeological Precinct. Listing No: 01860		
<b>References/Sources:</b>	<p>This nomination quotes extensively from information contained in the following sources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bolt, Peter, King's Dockyard, Dictionary of Sydney, 2008, <a href="https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/kings_dockyard">https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/kings_dockyard</a>, viewed 10 Feb 2024</li> <li>2. <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sydney_Cove_West_Archaeological_Precinct">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sydney_Cove_West_Archaeological_Precinct</a></li> <li>3. <a href="https://www.mca.com.au/about-us/mca-story/site/">https://www.mca.com.au/about-us/mca-story/site/</a></li> <li>4. NSW State Heritage Register: Sydney Cove West Archaeological Precinct. Listing No: 01860</li> </ol>		
<b>Nominated by:</b>	Michael Clarke		
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<b>EHA Branch:</b>	Sydney	<b>Nomination Date:</b>	12 February 2024



The Rocks [with King's Dockyard] Edward Dayes, 1804



Museum of Contemporary Art: site of King's Dockyard



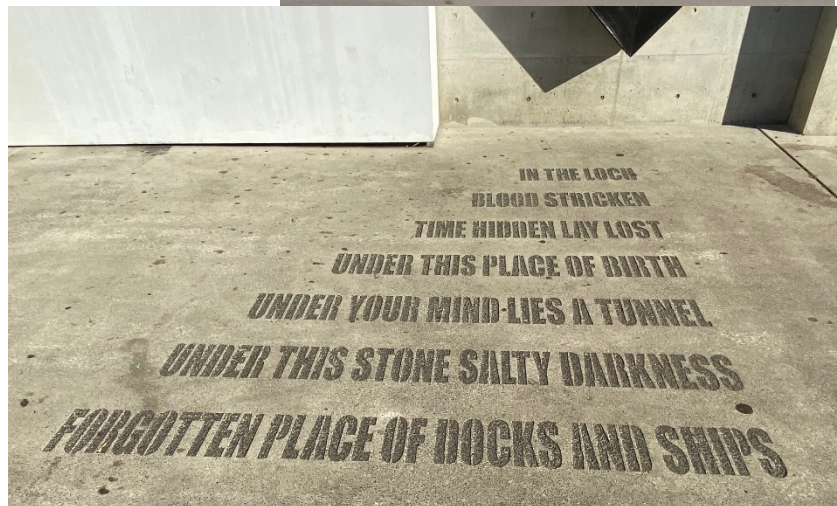
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Forecourt of Museum of Contemporary Art



In the loch  
blood stricken  
time hidden lay lost  
under this place of birth  
under your mind – lies a tunnel  
under this stone salty darkness  
forgotten place of docks and ships



Interpretation of the remains of King's Dockyard at Museum of Contemporary Art



Cadman's Cottage (1816) – Coxswain's barracks.